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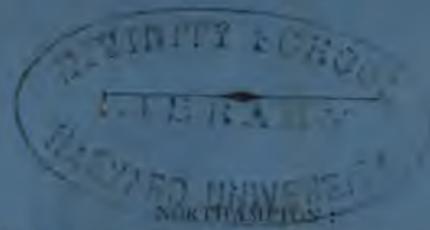
FLORENCE, MASS.

WITH ITS

ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION,

AND

BY-LAWS.



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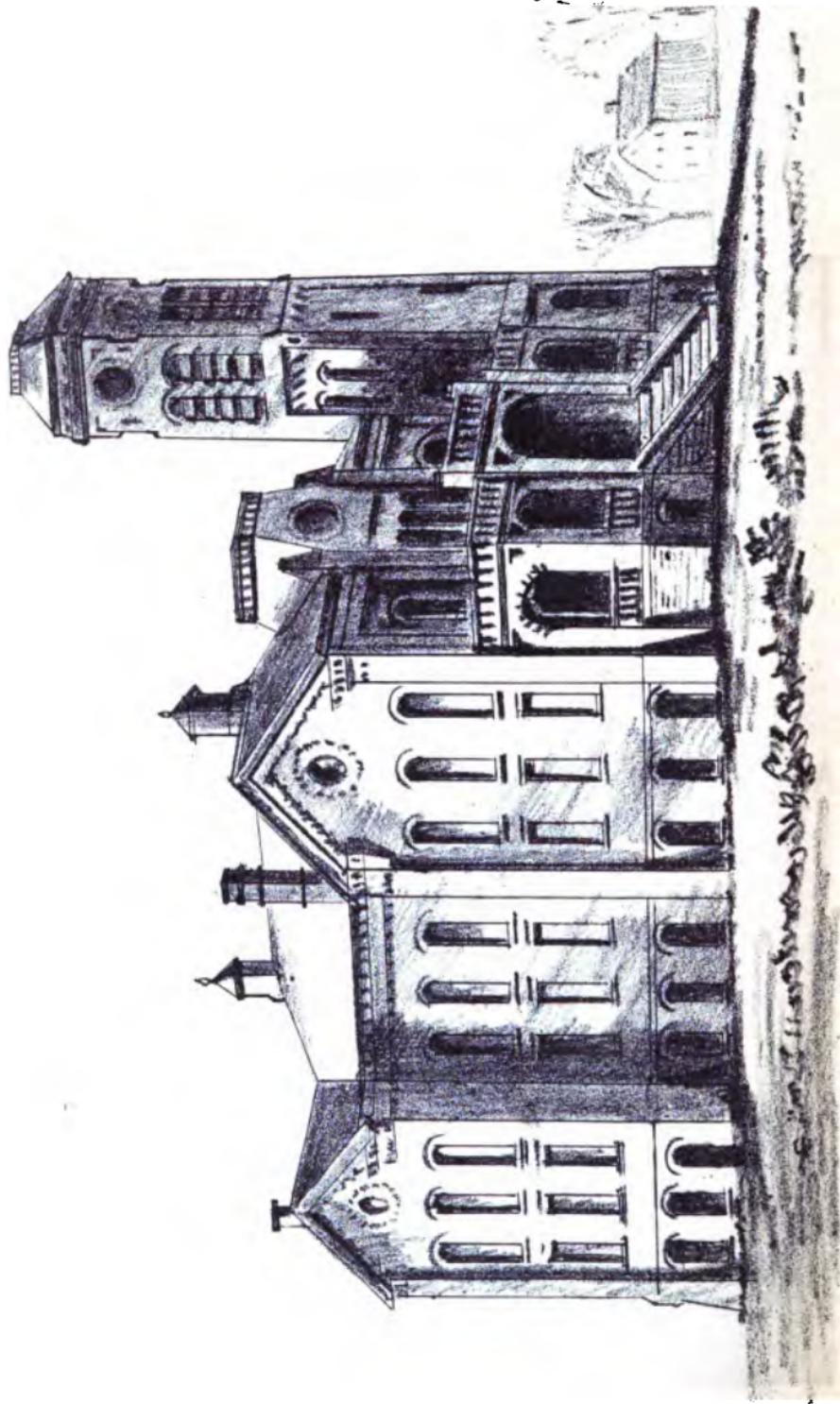
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HISTORY

OF THE

Free Congregational Society

OF

FLORENCE, MASS. —

WITH ITS

ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

AND

BY-LAWS.

NORTHAMPTON :

WADE WARNER & CO., PRINTERS.

1882.

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Free Congregational Society OF FLORENCE, MASS.

This society may perhaps claim the honor of being the first religious body in the United States to organize on a platform of entire freedom of thought and speech. The story of its birth and infancy is brief.

About forty years ago a company of earnest, reformatory men and women, who had the courage of conviction,—some of whom had been driven from the church because of their pronounced anti-slavery sympathies,—tried in this place an experiment of a new form of social life somewhat after the “Brook Farm” experiment, made at about the same time, near Boston. But, like that more famous enterprise, the Florence social venture, for similar reasons, was given up after a few years. The spirit of free inquiry and brotherly helpfulness, however, which especially animated the prime movers of this social experiment, survived the dissolution of the organization and has embodied itself in other forms.

From the first it was the custom of the people, in what are called "The Community times," to hold Sunday meetings, not so much for the "worship of God" in any conventional sense, as for the instruction of man in everything that pertained to human welfare. One of the cardinal principles of these meetings was freedom of discussion. After the co-operative experiment was abandoned, those members of the association who remained in Florence, together with their friends, continued to hold Sunday meetings, though not regularly, down to the time of the formation of the "Free Congregational Society of Florence." In pursuance of the following call, signed by twenty-seven citizens of Florence who had been interested in these Sunday meetings, and who believed that the friends of religious freedom should avail themselves of the strength there is in union and organized effort, a meeting was held at the time and place therein named.

TO THE PEOPLE OF FLORENCE AND VICINITY :

All interested in the promotion of good morals, general education and liberal religious sentiment, whether Catholic or Protestant, or of whatever sect, creed or nationality, are invited to meet in the South School House, on Sunday, May 3, 1863, at 3 1-2 o'clock, P. M., to organize arrangements for the better attainment of the objects above-named.

At the meeting, a Society was organized by the adoption and signing of the following

ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT.

We, the undersigned, inhabitants of Florence, and its vicinity, in the town of Northampton, wishing to avail ourselves of the advantages of associate effort for our advancement in truth and goodness, and for the promotion of general intelligence, good morals and liberal religious sentiments, do hereby agree to form ourselves into a body corporate under the name of the FREE CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY OF FLORENCE.

Respecting in each other, and in all, the right of intellect and conscience to be free, and holding it to be the duty of every one to keep his mind and heart at all times open to receive the truth, and follows its guidance, we set up no theological condition of membership and neither demand nor expect uniformity of doctrinal belief; asking only unity of purpose to seek and accept the right and true, and an honest aim and effort to make these the rule of life. And, recognizing the brotherhood of the human race, and the equality of human rights, we make no distinction as to the conditions and rights of membership in this Society, on account of sex, or color, or nationality.

The officers of this Society shall be a Moderator, Clerk, and Treasurer, who shall be first chosen at the first business meeting of the Society, and afterwards at each annual meeting thereof, and shall perform the customary duties of their respective offices.

The Society shall hold its annual meeting on the first Monday in April, at such hour and place as the Moderator of the preceding year shall appoint.

B Y - L A W S .

1st. All subscribers to the articles of association shall be considered members of the Society wherever they reside, so long as they manifest, by their lives, an honest purpose to promote its objects.

2d. The officers of the Society shall be chosen by ballot, unless at the meeting at which they are to be chosen, some other method shall be proposed through the presiding officer, and shall be adopted by unanimous vote, or by silent assent of all the members present.

3d. A majority of all the votes given shall be necessary to the choice of any officer, unless three attempts to obtain such majority shall have failed; in which case, at the fourth trial, the person having a larger number of votes than any other person, shall be considered chosen, though that number should not be a majority of the whole number given.

4th. Standing Committees shall be annually chosen which shall be :

First. An Executive Committee of *three* members,

to make arrangements for carrying into effect the votes and resolutions of the Society.

Second. A Library Committee of three members, to take measures for establishing a Library and Reading Room, to select books and periodicals for the same and have the charge of them when established.

Third. A Committee of five members on Music, to provide for singing in our public meetings, and promote, as far as may be, improvement therein.

Fourth. A School Committee of three or more members to take measures for opening and keeping up Sunday Schools under the auspices of the Society.

Fifth. In case of the Moderator's absence from any meeting of the Society, the meeting shall be called to order by the Clerk, and a Moderator *pro tem.* shall be chosen by nomination and show of hands. Should the Moderator and Clerk be both absent, both offices shall be filled *pro tem.* in like manner, on call of the Treasurer, or, in his absence, of any other member.

Sixth. The Moderator may call a special meeting of the Society whenever he thinks it desirable ; and it shall be his duty to call one, whenever five members shall request him in writing to do so.

Seventh. It shall be the duty of the Clerk to give public information of the hour and place of each Annual meeting, and the day, hour and place of each special meeting, by posting written notices of the same in two or more conspicuous places, at least seven days before the meeting notified is to be held.

When it became necessary to build or provide a suitable house for its place of meeting it was found that the Society was not incorporated as the statute required in order to hold property. To secure this right a new or supplemental organization was formed on the 10th of April, 1872 ; the old Society continuing, on its original platform, to exercise all the educational and religious functions for which it was originally founded. The supplemental society was, at first called "The Free Congregational Society," the name differing from that of the original society only in the omission of the words "of Florence." This distinction being so slight, the new society, in order to avoid confusion, propose to adopt, and are taking steps toward it, the title of Cosmian Hall Association.

When the Society was first organized, its meetings were held in the District School House ; but on Sunday, April 17th, 1864, it began to hold meetings in the new chapel and hall built for the purpose, in the then new building called Florence Hall. The use of the chapel, hall and library room, for ten years, was given to the Society, by its President. In 1874, a spacious and beautiful edifice, called Cosmian Hall, was completed, having been erected for the uses of the Society, by the subscriptions of members and others ; the larger part being contributed by its generous-hearted President. Cosmian Hall cost about \$40,000, and includes an attractive and richly decorated auditorium, capable of seating 700 persons, an organ and

grand piano, and a spacious and amply furnished stage, upon which dramatic entertainments are frequently given during the winter. The basement contains "Lower Cosmian Hall," and a suite of rooms which constitute the parlors and culinary department of the "Ladies' Industrial Union," an auxiliary of the Society.

The hall last mentioned is occupied on Sundays by the Cosmian Sunday School, and on week days for occasions of social recreations. The Ladies' Parlors, on Sundays, are devoted to classes of the Sunday School; and on week days to the Ladies' Industrial Union, social and literary gatherings.

The Sunday School room is adorned with portraits of Charles C. Burleigh, Theodore D. Weld, John G. Whittier and other noble men, and with Mr. Hale's mottoes, "Look up, and not down," "Look out and not in," "Look forward and not back," "Lend a hand."

Charles C. Burleigh, who had been for a number of years prior to May 3, 1863, employed as Sunday lecturer at Florence, remained as resident speaker of the Society from that date until April 6, 1873, when he resigned, and went to Bloomington, Ill., for a year. After his return he was a constant attendant upon the services of the society and Sunday School until his death, on the 13th day of June, 1878.

Mr. Burleigh, as is well known here, was struck by a railroad train in Florence, on the 3d of June,

1878, and sustained injuries which resulted in his death on the 13th of that month. The magnitude of this loss to the society, to the community, and to the whole country is immeasurable. As one of the founders of the society, as its steadfast and able defender, as the undaunted and eloquent champion and friend of the down-trodden slave, and of the oppressed everywhere, as a lofty example of purity and integrity, coupled with a matchless intellect, he will long live in the hearts of the members of the Free Congregational Society, and be enshrined in the dearest memories of thousands scattered over this broad continent.

It is fitting, in this connection, to speak of Mrs. Burleigh's labors in the society. In every department she was an earnest and efficient worker, fruitful in suggestions of ways and means. To use the words of one of her co-workers, "In her very presence was inspiration and incentive to every good word and work. The loving heart beat with warmest sympathy for all humanity, and her words of kindness and deeds of love, were balm to many saddened spirits. Blessed be her memory! Let us never forget her while our society has existence, for to her it owed so much in its earliest years."

In May, 1871, Miss Elizabeth M. Powell, now Mrs. Elizabeth Powell Bond, began to officiate as associate-resident speaker, and continued until May, 1872, when Rowland Connor took her place, and officiated in that capacity until the resignation

of Mr. Burleigh, when Mr. Connor became resident speaker, and held the office until August 1, 1874. From this last mentioned date, the Society had no resident speaker until September 1, 1875, when David H. Clark took the office, and held the same until September 1, 1878. Mr. W. H. Spencer and Mrs. Anna Garlin Spencer, late of Haverhill, Mass., who are at this date the resident speakers, were chosen in the summer of 1881, and began their labors on the first day of September of that year.

The resident speaker is not, like the minister or pastor of most religious societies, pledged to advocate and defend a formal statement of faith. He is under no intellectual bonds. He is at liberty to express freely his latest thought. It is understood that he speaks only for himself, and that his utterances, like those of any other member of the society, are at all times open to criticism. He is usually engaged to speak for a portion of the year, as it is the purpose, and has been the practice of the Society to have, during each year, a variety of speakers, so that every phase of thought may be fairly represented. The Society has been addressed by the representatives of Judaism, by orthodox and heretical Christians, by Spiritualists and Materialists, Theists and Agnostics, and those who could, perhaps, hardly be classed theologically anywhere, for the society believes that in this free exchange of ideas, and the hospitality that is willing to listen to diverse religious theories is the surest prom-

ise of the Truth which maketh free, which Lord Bacon pronounces "the sovereign good of human nature."

Among the names of prominent persons who have addressed the Society, some of them repeatedly, are Theodore D. Weld, John Weiss, Samuel Longfellow, Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, D. A. Wasson, Charles E. Norton, A. Bronson Alcott, Parker Pillsbury, Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Wm. J. Potter, Frederick Douglass, M. D. Conway, William Lloyd Garrison, Francis E. Abbott, Beriah Green, Aaron M. Powell, Mrs. Caroline H. Dall, William H. Burleigh, Henry C. Wright, Lucy Stone, Rabbi Schleisinger, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Samuel Johnson, Josiah P. Quincy, Horace Seaver, John W. Chadwick, Mrs. Frances D. Gage, William Denton, Susan B. Anthony S. H. Morse, Giles B. Stebbins, J. L. Hatch, Mrs. E. A. Kingsbury, Dio Lewis, B. F. Underwood, Mrs. Lillie Devereux Blake, Prof. S. C. Chandler, John T. Sargent, Frederic Frothingham, S. J. Finney, John F. Moors, Erastus Hopkins, Susan H. Wixon, Elder F. W. Evans, Dr. R. T. Trall, Mrs. M. W. Campbell, Charles Lenox Remond, Mrs. F. E. W. Harper, Edward C. Towne, Mrs. Nellie T. Brigham, Stephen S. Foster, Henry B. Blackwell, George Thompson, Prof. Felix Adler, Mrs. Clara Neymann, Frederic A. Hinckley, Prof. John Fiske, George Jacob Holyoake, Elizabeth K. Churchill, T. B. Forbush, Ivan Panin.

SUNDAY SCHOOL.

The members of the Society early saw the importance of establishing a Sunday School which should do for a liberal society what the Sunday Schools of the churches are doing for them. They felt that they ought not only to protect their children from the social attractions of these Sunday Schools, where they would become indoctrinated with theological notions which their parents believe are not only false, but morally mischievous, but that they should directly fortify their children against such influences, by teaching them the principles of free and rational religion, on which the Society was founded. To this end the Society, almost at the start, organized a Sunday School, which has been maintained to the present time, with a success that fully justifies the experiment. The following has been the usual order of exercises, of late :

The members of the Sunday School, numbering about a hundred, assemble in the Lower Hall at half past ten o'clock. At the stroke of the bell, the School comes to order, and joins in singing an opening song from "The Morning Stars," an admirable book for use in liberal Sunday Schools, as it is full of the song of birds, the fragrance of flowers, and Nature's beauty and melody, and almost destitute of objectionable theological features. Then the superintendent reads a lesson for the day, selected from any source, or superintendent and school join in alternate readings from the valuable service book of ethical sentiments, compiled by

F. A. Hinckley of Providence, R. I. Next the classes separate, going to their respective rooms for their class work. The class exercises occupy three-quarters of an hour, the superintendent, meanwhile, visiting each class to take the record of attendance, and note the progress of the pupils. At half-past eleven the piano summons all to the hall for general exercises. These exercises usually consist of recitations by one or two of the pupils, singing, music or reading by the same, and remarks by the superintendent or some adult members of the Sunday School. It is desirable that this half-hour shall be especially devoted to moral instruction. For that purpose it is well to have some regular subject assigned for that day, and that the superintendent select the recitations and readings so far as possible with reference to the topic of the hour. The present superintendent, Mr. Spencer, is taking up in order the following circle of virtues :

1, Love ; 2, Truthfulness ; 3, Justice ; 4, Self-Control ; 5, Purity ; 6, Order ; 7, Industry ; 8, Punctuality ; 9, Usefulness. Then these subjects may be subdivided ; the first general subject, for instance, may be subdivided into—

- a, Love of Home, (family affection) ;
- b, " " Country, (patriotism) ;
- c, " " Mankind, (brotherhood) ;
- d, " " The weak, (charity) ;
- e, " " Animals, (humanity) ;
- f, " " The best, (reverence);

and so on. Other similar divisions will readily suggest themselves to the teacher.

But the important thing is that each of these virtues should be taught, not in the abstract, but in the concrete. The child can only see a principle, vividly, when it is embodied. Liberals must adopt not the subject, but the method of instruction which the churches find so effective. It is true, we cannot, as they do, point the child to Jesus Christ as the incarnate God, and the exclusive embodiment of love and self-sacrifice, and indeed, the exemplification of all the circle of human virtues. We cannot do this simply because we do not believe he was that, but we can excite the child's love and reverence by picturing before his mind the career of some noble man or woman who has beautifully illustrated some special virtue we wish to inculcate. Thus we can take up any virtue and by well-chosen examples to illustrate, we can impart, not simply historical information to our youth, but what should be the special function of the Sunday School, give moral aspiration to life. The object of the lesson should be to win the pupil's love and admiration for the subject presented, and to quicken the conscience to imitation. The child cannot grow on denials of any sort. He must be nerved by affirmations. Nothing is so morally stimulating, next to the living example, as biography. Liberals should avail themselves of those means which history puts into their hands:

Thus the larger part of the half-hour time that every Sunday is devoted to the "general exercises," is employed in imparting the moral lessons which come from a study and discussion of the character and life of worthy men and women. After a final song by the school, and the recitation in concert of an appropriate sentiment written upon the black-board, the session closes at 12 o'clock.

The special *class work* in a school like this must, of course, be determined by the capacities and needs of the pupils. There are classes in the study of language and literature ; in political and physical science ; in the study of ethical problems ; in drawing and English composition, and classes of younger pupils in such simple moral instruction as is adapted to the mind of the child. All theological indoctrination, even of the most liberal Christian type, is excluded from the school. It is the opinion of the Society that the child should be protected from all theological bias. Fill its mind with a love for truth, whatever it may be ; with the spirit of fearless inquiry ; with a knowledge of the results of scientific investigation, so far as they have been revealed, especially in the relation of man to man, and directly and indirectly seek to create in the child a desire to know the truth and to do the right. That we have not succeeded in this high aim as well as we had hoped, may readily be admitted, but we do think that this Sunday School has not only exerted an elevating effect on the members of it, but has radiated an influence which

has raised the moral tone of the whole community. In a place like Florence, where many of the young people begin to work very early in life in the mills and factories, there is a constant tendency to stagnation of thought and depression of moral aims. A Sunday School like this, which invites the young to share its studies and enjoy its entertainments, cannot but stimulate to better life all those who come within the radius of its influence, and these are many. For, besides the regular Sunday exercises of the School at 10 1-2 o'clock, it has been the custom of the Society for several years to devote the lecture hour, 2 P. M., one Sunday afternoon in each month, to a concert by the choir and Sunday School. These occasions usually draw very large audiences. The exercises consist of readings, recitations, vocal and instrumental music, and frequently original essays have been read. Among the subjects of such essays, are the following : "Heroism;" "Services;" "Autumn;" "Ripeness;" "Our Work;" "Suggestions for the New Year;" "Richard II;" "Henry V;" "What may be done with Half-Hours;" "A Study of 'As You Like It;'" "Objects and Methods of the Cosmian Sunday School;" "Negation and Affirmation in our Society;" "Lesson of the Leaves;" "Steps to a Noble Life;" "Enthusiasm among Liberals;" "Our Needs,—Unity of Spirit and Earnest Work;" "Retrospect and Prospect;" "Temperance."

During the last year the Superintendent has inaugurated the somewhat novel practice of making

every concert a special lesson for the day. This is done by making the selections of recitations, readings, music and remarks appropriate to the selected topic. It is a new idea, and seems to be very attractive and popular with the people. In this way the Sunday School is doing missionary work.

During the three years that the Society was without a resident speaker, from September, '78, to September, '81, on 37 Sundays, in addition to the 32 Sundays occupied by the choir and Sunday School, the services were arranged by Miss E. C. Elder, the Superintendent of the Sunday School. About 30 different persons contributed to the exercises, which included lectures on "Public Opinion," "Spirit and Methods of Primary Instruction;" "Moses and Christ, an Historical and Religious Comparison;" "Temptation;" and essays on "Evil Speaking;" "Socrates;" "Bayard Taylor;" "The Stoics;" and "Joan of Arc." Sometimes the exercises consisted of select readings upon a special subject, e. g., "Toleration;" "Buddha;" "Channing;" "Parker;" "L. M. Child;" "Needs of Free Religion;" "Reform in Politics;" etc. Also during the time numerous sermons were read, including several of the series on "Evolution of Morals;" by M. J. Savage, one or more by J. W. Chadwick, Prof. Felix Adler, and W. J. Potter. During this interregnum a series of Sunday evening meetings were held in the Lower Hall, under the auspices of the Society, and were well attended. The exercises were conducted by members of the Society in turn,

it being a rule that no one should be called to serve twice during the same season. By this means a large number of the members of the Society were induced to participate in the exercises, which were of a musical and literary character.

The experience of the Society during these three years that they were without a resident speaker, shows what may be done by organization and co-operation of liberals, even in a village of two thousand inhabitants, without large expenditure of money. At the same time the Society fully appreciates the advantages of having a resident speaker; one who may represent the Society at all times, on public occasions; at weddings and funerals, and who may be a kind of social leader; one who may be educated for the special work, and may devote his whole time to the interests of the Society and Sunday School, and by his teaching and example illustrate the virtues which our rational religion, above all others, ought to exemplify.

Such liberal speakers, men and women, we believe, will be forthcoming when the call of the people is heard. The demand will find its supply. No doubt we need a school, as Prof. Adler has advocated, for the especial training of able leaders of ethical instruction. In the no distant day such a school, we hope, will be founded. But in the meantime there bids fair to be a supply of radical teachers from the yearly exodus of ministers from the ranks of the Church, to say nothing of the oc-

casional geniuses which seem to spring up spontaneously in unlooked-for nooks of society. Everywhere, within the Christian borders, even inside of Unitarianism, there is an increasing number of young men, cultured, able, sincere, who are chafing under their intellectual bonds and longing for some freer field of thought and labor. Large numbers of these are crowded out of the Church by the force of their convictions, and finding no liberal organization ready to welcome them, must abandon a line of labor for which they have, it may be, a special taste as well as training, and at the eleventh hour seek to put their hand to some other plow. Many a man has thus deliberately sacrificed a brilliant future on the altar of honesty. Can we wonder that many who have outgrown the old faiths, still retain their hold on the Church benefices, long after they have lost hold of the church creeds? If liberals would do their duty, how much easier would it be for the liberal preacher to be true to the truth as he sees it!

This Society, having now had a prosperous organized existence of nineteen years, sometimes with, and sometimes without a settled leader, believes that it has worked out the problem of securing unity of effort with diversity of belief, and it would therefore earnestly urge rationalists everywhere to organize on a basis similar to its own. In scores of the towns and cities of the United States, this may

be, and should be done. All that is needed is for two or three generous, wise, determined men and women to lead in the movement. It ought to be done, not simply for the edification of the parents themselves, but especially for the sake of their children. How many little ones are enticed into orthodox Sunday Schools by the social attractions they offer. Here their young minds are being pre-empted by all sorts of theological follies and superstitions,—errors implanted there that will root deep in the subsoil of the brain, and must be uprooted hereafter with heart pain and bloody sweat. It seems to us that liberals are not guiltless in the thoughtlessness and indifference with which they view the indoctrination of the minds of their children with stuff they themselves have repudiated long ago. They do not realize the wrong they are doing. Let them bestir themselves and organize Sunday Schools of their own, where rational instruction with social pleasure may be afforded.

We say to liberals, organize for the sake of your children, if for nothing more. But you ought to do so for your own good and the sake of furthering what you believe to be the truth, in the community. There is a kind of spirit of independence run mad among some come-outers. They seem to fear to work *with* others, lest they be compelled to work *under* them. So they form companies of one and march against the enemy like a horde of "bush-whackers," every one on "his own hook," instead of organizing and charging in solid phalanx. This

is a deplorable waste of ammunition and opportunity. There must be unity of effort to succeed. It is a mistake, however, to suppose that a Society cannot be organized without a creedal basis. The time is coming, it is, indeed, almost here, when it will be impossible to base any religious society upon a theological statement, however broad. The controversy that is now going on respecting the election of Rev. Dr. Smyth to the Abbot Professorship of Andover Theological Seminary, which threatens to split New England Congregational orthodoxy, shows the worse than folly of resting a progressive institution upon an immovable creed. If the institution is saved it is at the sacrifice of the sincerity and intellectual uprightness of those who save it. The basis of this Free Congregational Society is so broad that it needs not to rest upon the hypocrisy of its members. All we ask is "unity of purpose to seek and accept the right and the true, and an honest aim and effort to make these the rule of life." It is upon this broad basis that the Society was planted nearly twenty years ago, and it feels itself as enduring as the solid walls of its great temple of freedom. The experience of this Society, we repeat, has established the fact that organization is compatible with the utmost intellectual freedom. All that is needed is a clear comprehension of the work to be done, and an earnest moral purpose to do it. We say *work* to be done. What is this? The same moral, educational, charitable and reformatory work which the Churches, in a measure, per-

form. Liberals can do this labor far better than the Churches, if they will, for they are not swathed by the winding-sheet of a dead theology. Their hands are free to plan and rectify, to build and improve without stopping to ask permission of St. Paul, or praying to be helped "for Christ's sake." It is true liberals can do, and many do, much of this work as individuals. This is well, but in that case, quite often an effete theology will get the credit of it, and the Church will glory in it. Let liberals do this work so far as possible *as a society*, and then the honor goes to whom the honor is due. Then they speak as one having authority. Then they are recognized as an established moral force in the community, and respected for what they are.

And again, liberals should organize, not simply for the proper education of their children, nor for the improvement of the relations of man to man, as individual beings, but also for the diffusion of correct ideas of the true relation of the State to the individual, and the defense of our political and religious liberties. We are not alarmists, but we think it behooves the free-thinkers of America to guard their constitutional inheritance. When we find, in this age, men of culture, of position, and wide influence,—such preachers, for instance, as the Rev. Dr. Miner of Boston, and such educators as the Hon. J. H. Seelye, president of Amherst college, and many others, gravely advocating the right and duty of Christians to ingraft sectarianism into the United States Constitution, is it not evident

that the lessons and examples of free thought in religion cannot be too numerous or too conspicuous? And this is being done at the very time when the people of the old world are struggling to throw off the yoke of church domination, which their long experience proves to be a curse and a snare. It is necessary, even at this late day, to teach what ought to be truisms in America, that religion must be voluntary, and that the State is playing the role of the tyrant when she undertakes to make any theological dogma a bar to civil rights. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty," is an old proverb, indeed, but in view of the progress of Roman Imperialism, and the force of Protestant bigotry in this country, it may be a proverb that will need some modern applications. For the sake of our children, ourselves, and our country, let the liberals of America awake to their duties!

We may perhaps close this History of the Free Congregational Society of Florence in no more fitting words than to quote the following from the Annual Report of the executive committee for the year ending April 3d, 1882 :—

"And now, at this late day, in spite of all the positive work that Cosmians have done, we are told by the upholders of Church and creed limitations of thought and speech, that we are mere seekers and doubters, and that we cannot build a religious Society on denials. Now, we believe that there is one thing, if there is no other, that Cosmians have

found out, settled and affirmed, and that one thing is a sufficient foundation for a religious Society to be built upon, namely,—Toleration,—the principle that character, not creed, shall be the ground of fellowship. Who can doubt that the horrible outrages now being inflicted on the Jews in Russia have their main root in religious hate and intolerance? The people of that so-called Christian nation, are, indeed, “letting their light shine,” but it is a light that gleams from their murderous daggers and incendiary torches, casting its lurid glare on the affrighted victims of their brutality and lust.”

“ Is true freedom but to break
Fetters for our own dear sake,
And, with leathern hearts, forget
That we owe mankind a debt ?
No ! true freedom is to share
All the chains our brothers wear,
And, with heart and hand, to be
Earnest to make others free.”

OFFICERS FOR 1882.

Moderator—Samuel L. Hill.

Clerk—A. G. Hill.

Treasurer—A. T. Lilly.

Executive Committee—Seth Hunt, A. T. Lilly; Joseph Marsh.

Committee on Music—L. F. Plympton, Mrs. M. J. Branch, Mrs. A. G. Hill, Samuel Porter, Miss Nannie Worth.

Committee on Sunday School—Mary W. Bond, A. G. Hill, Ella C. Elder, W. H. Spencer, Anna Garlin Spencer.

Committee on Hospitality—Mrs. A. G. Hill, Miss E. C. Elder, L. F. Plympton.

Soliciting Committee—Mrs. E. K. Sheffield, Mrs. F. Schadee, Mrs. L. J. Ranney, David Remington, Robert M. Branch, Dwight A. Ross, Dr. J. B. Learned, Joseph Marsh, L. F. Plympton.

Committee to seat Strangers—D. A. Ross, M. C. Howard.

Committee on Charity—The Ladies of the Industrial Union.

Superintendent of Sunday School—W. H. Spencer.

Treasurer and Librarian—Harry Townend.

Organist—Fred Atkins.

